

Susan Doylen
July 14, 2007
Location: Estes Park Museum

Betty Kilsdonk: This interview is taking place on July 14, 2007, in the Estes Park Museum as part of a series called Estes Park: A Study of Growth. Please state your full name.

Susan Doylen: I'm Sue Doylen.

Betty Kilsdonk: And let's talk about your early life. You were born in Baltimore.

Susan Doylen: Correct.

Betty Kilsdonk: You lived in Denver and you vacationed in Estes Park.

Susan Doylen: Correct.

Betty Kilsdonk: Why did your parents move to Denver, and why did they choose Estes Park for vacations?

Susan Doylen: Well, my mother had moved many places on the Eastern Seaboard growing up. She met my father at Yale. He had grown up in Fort Morgan, Colorado, and he was born in Windsor, Colorado. When he graduated from Yale, he had been working summers for Glenn L. Martin Company and they were opening the aerospace division in Waterton Canyon in southwest Denver. My grandparents still being in Fort Morgan, he felt comfortable coming back and that he, as an only child, could help them and provide for his family doing what he loved.

Betty Kilsdonk: Where did you stay in Estes Park as a child?

Susan Doylen: As a child . . . my grandparents, in 1958, had purchased a cabin that was located at the south entrance of Rocky Mountain National Park. And when they expanded that, those cabins were moved. The cabin was moved to Morgan Circle, right off of University and Morgan Drive up there. And there were several other families from Fort Morgan who had done similar things so that's how it became the Fort Morgan colony area.

Betty Kilsdonk: What are your earliest memories of Estes Park?

Susan Doylen: Oh, they're so good. The smells, whether it's just the pine after rain, whether it's the smells of candy corn downtown. There are so many sensory things—the wind, the coolness. The way you slept, it was different. Growing up in southwest Denver, there was a lot of noise, there

was the racecar track . . . the sensory things were so different. The visual sensory things; the auditory, what you heard; what you smelled; what you saw.

Betty Kilsdonk: So let's talk about the visual. If you took a walk down the Elkhorn Avenue of your childhood, what kinds of things would you see?

Susan Doylen: It wasn't . . . it was more . . . a lot of texture. And when I say "texture," I mean things like differences in storefronts. The more modern brick like the old Rexall building where Bob Movis [sp] had the Rexall, which is now Chicago's Best . . . or, currently Chicago's Best. And then there were the old buildings, the ones that had the log sidings or the clapboard sidings, and the paint wasn't always new. And there were no trees. It was much . . . there was Stoner's Doghouse, and Stoner's Doghouse had the big river rocks on it. It was just very different; very different than it is now.

There were more . . . it was more of a small town feel. It wasn't so much gifts as it was things like drugstores and gas stations, and it was more of the utilitarian types of shopping. So the things I remember, there were the Log Cabin, where you could get a broasted chicken, and great waffles in the morning. There was Colter's Waffle Shop. There was Stoner's Doghouse, which, for a hole in the wall, was an amazing . . . it was sort of a very quintessential Estes Park kind of thing from that time period.

Betty Kilsdonk: It was a food [inaudible]?

Susan Doylen: Yeah. Stoner's Doghouse served hot dogs, hamburgers, corn . . . I think they had French fries, and that was pretty much it. And Dale [sp] Stoner ran it and it was just a little cubicle, really, and it was just amazing; great food. Probably not healthy food, but it was great food. It wasn't the sort of corporate sameness that we see in so many of the restaurants today; it was truly unique, it was truly Estes Park.

Betty Kilsdonk: What do you remember about the merchants that you interacted with?

Susan Doylen: There was one . . . there were several merchants. Of course, there was Mrs. Miller, and Mrs. Miller has always . . . even Toni carries on the tradition today, but Mrs. Miller was sort of the old Estes Park. They did business in the summer and they left in the winter.

There was a family, and I can't remember the name, that had the Thunderbird Shop, and that was my sort of one-year treat. You always went down and went shopping, and I'd always have, like, \$10 or something that I'd saved up from babysitting or whatever and go in there

and buy myself a little turquoise ring, and I still have a couple of them. But the family that ran that . . . I think they struggled, but they were really wonderful and they were always very helpful and appreciative that I understood the art form, the Indian art form, and appreciated the older styles, not just the stuff that was mass-produced and sold pretty readily. But I think they were appreciative of that; because they were an older couple and to see a young person who at least knew a little bit about it; and I learned more as I grew older. But I think they . . . they were very helpful and very kind.

And, of course, there was the taffy shop and the ownership of that really hasn't changed. My father, to this day, who lives in Florida, says, "Would you send us a box of taffy?" So I do that every one in a while just because it's part of our history as a family, it's part of my childhood. So some things haven't changed a whole lot.

But there's less of the standard commerce sorts of things downtown.

Betty Kilsdonk: We have the people of Estes Park whom would we regard as historic treasures, like Charlie Eagle Plume, Casey Martin . . . who would you consider to be those people and what are your memories of those kind of historic treasures people?

Susan Doylen: You say Casey Martin, and before I probably knew anyone else, Casey Martin was very important to our family. Every time we were up, my grandmother would save tickets and we would go down and do Casey's train.

At the time, there was a little . . . my first memory of Casey was that there was a little gas station there with a trout pond out front and you could buy, like, a nickel bag or a dime bag of pellets to feed the trout. And then you'd go ride the train. And Casey was just lively and bubbly and he did his dance and he did his song. There's some wonderful black-and-white photos in the family album of myself and my brothers, over the years, at Casey's.

As I grew older, it wasn't quite as magical as it was when I was young, but as a parent, when my girls were little, Casey's train had been moved out to Gary Coleman's [sp] place; and I had to have a picture of them and the train just as a statement of continuity of our family and its relationship to Estes Park.

Betty Kilsdonk: Anyone else that you want to talk about?

Susan Doylen: Oh! Bernie; Bernie and Glenna. They're so much a part of what Estes Park

is, was, and always will be in my heart, whether it stays that way or not.

Betty Kilsdonk: You're talking about Bernie and Glenna Dannels.

Susan Doylen: Bernie and Glenna Dannels. Bernie gave so much to his community and he did it in such a gracious manner. He worked hard and he really was quite compassionate and quite caring and quite giving to not only his family and his extended family but also the people that worked for him as well as the community. Those, I think, are the people that I would consider to be really, true historic treasures. I never knew Charlie Eagle Plume but Bernie and Casey are the ones that really stick out in my mind as being people that I will never forget.

Betty Kilsdonk: As you grew older, you traveled a lot yourself. You went to school in Wellesley and also in Oregon.

Susan Doylen: Right.

Betty Kilsdonk: Why did you end up going to those schools, and how did that affect your view of what Estes Park was?

Susan Doylen: When I was in high school, my mother had gone . . . I had gone to public high school—it was a grades 7 through 12 high school in southwest Denver, John F. Kennedy. And my mother, because her family had traveled a lot, she had, as my grandmother had before her, gone to Dana Hall in Wellesley, Massachusetts.

I tried it. I did one year, I got good grades, but it just . . . it was a very Eastern feel, and it was a very different Eastern feel. These girls were strong, they were confident, and I'd grown up in southwest Denver; I was not as strong and I was not as self-reliant as these gals were. So I came back and I finished out my high school years at Kennedy. And in the summers I'd come up here, oftentimes by myself, just because it felt good. It felt safe; it felt like I could be who I had grown up as, be the kind of person I'd grown up as and I didn't have to put on airs or do anything that was really foreign to who I was.

And after high school, I went to Lewis and Clark College for a year and a half, in Oregon. And for half a year, I was working with the Volunteers in Service to America program in Hillsboro, Oregon, working with a migrant education program in Washington County, Hillsboro, Oregon. And I learned a lot about communication, I learned a lot about living on my own on \$200 or less, and that was challenging; that was tough.

At that point, I came back and finished my time at UNC, changed my

major—I'd been a sociology and communications major prior to my return and returned to my roots, loving art, and finished it with a degree in art education.

And at that point, there were several people I was going to school with who exhibited pots at Spectrum Gallery, which was owned by Glenna and Bernie. So I wrote Glenna letter saying, you know, "I've always loved Estes Park and I have a place to live and I'd like to come work for you." And I gave her a little bit about my background in retail and that sort of thing. So she said, "Oh, come work for me."

And so after I graduated in '79, I moved up here and really sort of started my life in Estes Park. And while I had known it, I was not . . . I wasn't really a community member per se until I really started working for Glenna and Bernie. Then I really got to know a lot of the community. I got to know not only their friends but a little bit about what it took to be a good community member. Bernie was a wonderful example of an individual who was involved in their community, who loved their community. He was on the fire department, he served on the board, he helped people when they needed help, and that's sort of the model that I used for living in a small community.

So I ended up staying. With the exception of a year and a half, I've lived here continuously since 1979. And this is where I met my husband, this is where we started a business together, this is where we were married, this is where our kids were born; this is home. For better or for worse, this is home, and I worry about its future, but I . . . we love this place. And whether we'll stay here, I don't know, but this is where the most important parts of my life have been lived out.

Betty Kilsdonk: And why did you choose the printing and shipping business?

Susan Doylen: Hmm . . . okay. We needed . . . my husband, Dan, had . . . when he got out of the military, he entered an apprenticeship in a trade environment in Wisconsin in the printing industry. And he ended up out here because his parents had retired out here and that's what he knew. And I knew a little bit about art and design through my work over the years and I knew a lot about retail and some management and some finance and things like that.

So we said . . . there was a little business that had basically occupied a small cubbyhole south of the post office for less than six months, and they wanted a huge figure for it and we ultimately bought it from them for a little bit less and we went to it. Dan had worked for Dennis Quirk [sp] at Village Instaprint on Dunraven at the time and wasn't happy with the direction that Dennis was going and . . . away from printing and more into

advertising and that sort of thing. So Dan really . . . he loved the equipment, he loves the mechanics of it, and he knew he could do it.

So we started the business and on July 10 of 1984, we took over the business and started working it. And over the years, we expanded it into the back and then realized that we had a landlord who was focused on other things other than what we were and the leases became oppressive and so we felt the only way to really make ourselves independent was to buy the building—to buy a building. So the building one door north of the post office came on the market, I called the owners, they said, “How much you want to put down?” They said, “We’ll carry you,” and we did it. And we didn’t know when we would move but we knew we would move.

At the end of our lease . . . as we anticipated the end of our lease, we worked with an architect and the bank to determine whether it was feasible and it was scary and we had to put our house on the line and a few other things, but we felt that it was the best way to secure our future. And . . . you know, we lived on less for a long time and I had the ability to work other jobs during the building years, and we did it. So we moved into the old Baldrige [sp] Boardinghouse, which I think it was originally known as back in the ‘30s. Or at least that’s my understanding from Margaret Houston, that that was sort of what it was.

And we remodeled it and added on and found some very interesting artifacts when we were opening it up. It had been expanded in the ‘30s and there were . . . for insulation, there was a lot of newspaper, which I think was fairly common in those days; there were sort of stand-up cut-outs for products, food products or personal products. Then there were a bunch of glass bottles under there—like, they were working hard but they were playing hard, too—under the house where it was added on to.

Betty Kilsdonk: They were not Coca-Cola bottles?

Susan Doylen: They were not Coca-Cola bottles, no. So it was an education. And talking to Margaret Houston—and she was a character, too, if you want to talk about living history. She was. . . .

Betty Kilsdonk: Talk about her a little bit.

Susan Doylen: She was very interesting. You know, they talk about the good old boys—Margaret was just amazing. She was tough, she was strong, she was smart, and she could stand up with those boys. She had some chutzpah; she was pretty cool. She was quite a character. You may not have agreed with her, but boy, you had to look at her and say, “This woman lived in a man’s world the way a lot of women couldn’t—of her peers.” She was a tough

old bird. She was one of the . . . she was, I think, the first woman to serve on the board of trustees and she was pretty amazing. So, yeah.

Betty Kilsdonk: If you had to name the single largest obstacle for a small business owner in Estes Park, what would you say?

Susan Doylen: I think the reason that businesses fail in Estes Park is because the work ethic isn't there. I think if you are willing to work your own business, I think if you are willing to sacrifice in the early years. . . . And I mean sacrifice—I don't mean hiring a bunch of people and taking a month-long vacation to wherever; I mean, really sit there and work it. And have a good plan to begin with, a good vision, and some real fiscal conservative tendencies, I think you can make it. I think you can still make it. I think you can make it here, I think you can make it almost anywhere. But you've got to be willing to go with the flow. If go with the flow means that you have some lean times like we did . . . during the lean times, I cleaned houses. During the lean times, I did other people's books. During the lean times, I worked retail, even if it meant that I wasn't home at night in the summers. You've just got to keep the focus.

And I think so many people . . . they don't work within a confine and that's, I think, where the failure comes. Either the plan isn't good enough to begin with . . . a lot of people see somebody doing something and they think, "Oh, well, they're making money; I can make money doing the same thing." Well, they don't really do anything different. They don't say, "What is my strength?" And I think you have to look internally and say, "What's my strength?" not what these people are doing. If they're selling T-shirts, what makes your T-shirt shop any different? You've got to . . . you've got to analyze it into the ground. And I think that's where a lot of the failure comes.

Betty Kilsdonk: I want to ask you a little bit about the Lawn Lake Flood.

Susan Doylen: Okay.

Betty Kilsdonk: What you remember about it and about the rebuilding that [inaudible]

Susan Doylen: That was the summer I was in Denver and I watched it on TV and it was just the most frightening thing to me. Because I saw stores where I . . . next door to where I'd worked. And I saw people that I knew, whether it was at the Continental, or . . . I don't know, it may have been Lonigan's at that time. And then, I watched Steve Nagl and I watched all these people that I knew struggling, shoveling. And I thought, "This is not good."

So I had time off, I asked for some time off, from where I was working at

the time . . . and I don't even remember where I was working in Denver at the time. But I came up and I connected with my friend Kathy Collins, who worked at Mrs. Miller's, and so we dug mud. And we dug. . . And I went to Glenna and Bernie and I washed pots. I washed pots and I dug mud.

Betty Kilsdonk: What was Mrs. Miller's—what kind of a business was that?

Susan Doylen: Mrs. Miller's is Indian Village, on the corner. And Kathy had worked for her since I think she was 16, and Kathy was a good friend and so then we'd get together . . . work all day, start early, finish up 3:00, 4:00 in the afternoon and then go to the Wheel Bar and have beers. That was one of the first businesses that got dug out, was the Wheel Bar. They had had linoleum tile down and they went to the wood floor because they just had to get the wood opened up. And I think today still there's the wooden floor back up. Maybe it was a remodeling of sorts.

The flood created some fast friendships that'll always be there. That was . . . you know, as tragic as it was it was really a lot of fun because you saw people that cared enough to come out and work hard for nothing because it was just the thing you did because it was like your parents—you cared about them and you had to take care of them. And that's sort of the way I think we felt about this town at that time. There were a lot of us that realized that this is really a very important place.

Betty Kilsdonk: How long did the clean-up take?

Susan Doylen: Well, I was only up for, I think, three or four days because I had to get back to work. But I think pretty much by the end of the summer, you still saw remnants of it. But the majority of the stores were back in business; some of them had lost so much that I think there were some people that—in my recollection, and I may be wrong—that just walked away because they had lost so much and they were in such a huge hole. But a lot of people, you know, sold things at half price and got back on their feet that way.

Betty Kilsdonk: So you mentioned friendships that were formed as a result of the flood. What other kinds of changes occurred?

Susan Doylen: Well, and that was the time when EPURA really came into its own. The downtown looks . . . it is truly lovely; it is very different. But it has a very different feel. It isn't so much general commerce—the drugstores, the hardware stores, things like that. It's more of the gifts and the tourist kinds of perceived expectations. It's very different downtown. And yes, it is lovely and I think there are a lot of improvements. We make it a more

walking-friendly kind of environment and some of the more community . . . some of the community needs are more peripheral to the core, so. . . . It's very different.

Betty Kilsdonk: Do you think the . . . have you seen a change in the type of tourist who comes to the area since your childhood or do you think it's been the same?

Susan Doylen: I see a lot of families coming, still, that have been here summer after summer after summer but they're not staying quite as long. I think with our society and people's fear for employment and just the constant demand for more and more stimulus, people aren't content to sit on a porch and read a book; they want to be stimulated more, they want more activity. And I think we have a lot of those things but I think that there isn't as much family-centered kinds of things. And I think that's part of a societal thing that has changed with more divorce and families sharing things and things are sort of more societal trends than they are Estes Park trends. I don't think . . . but I still see a lot of families come and I see family cabins and things like that. We have customers that come year after year after year who have real lives and real jobs in other places, but they always come see me in the summer. These are people from Texas and Michigan and Florida and . . . so we have a lot of that, still.

Betty Kilsdonk: You've had a long career in politics in Estes Park. What was the impetus for you to get started with public office?

Susan Doylen: I go back to Bernie. Bernie was really my example for a lot of things. He loved this community; I love this community. When Polly Gunn—Polly Garrett Gunn—asked me to run in 1992, I thought about it. I'd been attending meetings and was learning more and more about what EPURA was doing and a variety of things. And as a business owner, I was getting more involved in discussions about improvements and things like that.

And so I figured, "You know, they need, No. 1, a woman. They need maybe a different voice—someone who is trying to raise a family in this community." At the time, there were a lot of folks who either had older children or were retired or not necessarily working in the community. And I think I had a different voice; I think I represented a different segment of the community. And so I went ahead and ran and I lost by, I think, 20 or 30 votes, which was . . . that's okay; you lose. [Chuckles]

But I learned a lot about myself and I learned even more about my community and the process. And when a planning commission vacancy opened up, Bernie appointed me to that.

And then in 1993, when Dave Barker left, I was appointed to fill that

unexpired term. And then '94, I was reelected; in '98, I was reelected; and 2002. And then in 2006, because of term limits that were adopted in the state in, I think, '98, I was told I had no more place in the community, which sort of broke my heart. But it was a long ride; it was a good ride.

Betty Kilsdonk: Let's talk about . . . so you served under several mayors?

Susan Doylen: Three mayors.

Betty Kilsdonk: Let's talk about them a little bit and what you remember about them and what it was like to serve under them.

Susan Doylen: Each one of them has a little different style. Bernie was sort of like your father. He listened and he let you express ideas and he very softly . . . he had a very soft way about him, in my opinion. It was always . . . he would . . . he was a good mayor. He had . . . he was very much a real person. Very different style than Bob.

Bob was . . . Bob had worked for the town so he had a very different vision than Bernie did. Bob had worked Light and Power for years and his family had owned, I think, the bakery here. Bob was a different kind of guy. He had done well for himself; he was doing some developing things at the time. And I don't know if his heart was really into it. I think he had done it because he was supposed to do it, in his mind. And he was a good mayor. Was he a great mayor? I don't know; I don't know.

He did one term and then John ran—and John brings a lot of different things to the table. He brought his background as a police chief, as a school board member, as a father. And he was working at the schools at the time, doing the discipline stuff, the . . . and he brought a very different style, even yet. It was more bureaucratic; it was maybe a little bit less country. It was sort of a transition and it's sort of indicative of, I think, the population of the community. I think under John, we've tried awful hard to grow gracefully. He's very much a stickler for doing things well.

I have a lot of good things to say about John; I admire him as a friend, as a leader. He's a good man. But the other two are good men, too—not to discount them. But I worked with John for eight years—nine, 10 years—so I know the man pretty well and I have a lot of good things to say about him.

Betty Kilsdonk: What would you say is your greatest accomplishment of your time on the town board?

Susan Doylen: Oh, wow. I am so proud of so many of the things we did, for better or for

worse. Times change. The comprehensive plan, as difficult as it was, was a framework for maturity. We had a lot of new people coming to town with expectations and a desire to make it one way or another way, and through the comprehensive plan, we tried to find a balance so that it wasn't all development and it wasn't all open space; that there was a balance.

I'm proud of the fact that this museum's grown. I'm proud of the fact that the senior center works as well as it does, that we have one.

I'm proud of the fact that we have a housing authority. I'm very, very proud of that because, as the population has changed, there's more diversity, or there's more disparity of income levels in our community. And the economy of this community is so tightly aligned with the industry of tourism that we cannot afford to price out any more young families and I think the housing authority's at least . . . it isn't a solution but it sure is a start. Proud of that.

I'm proud of the new visitors' center; I'm proud of the way we're serving our visitors through that visitors' center. I'm proud of the professional staff. I'm proud of the firehouse.

I'm proud that we've maintained at least . . . as more and more people come, I'm proud that we've been able to maintain as much of a community as we have because I think in this society it's so hard; people are so insular with electronics and communications being what they are that they don't do a lot of community things.

Young families are working harder and harder to make a living, and they don't have the opportunity to do some of the community things. But we have some pretty wonderful community things that are traditions in families, whether it's Halloween downtown or the Christmas parade—participating in or viewing. The Quota's Easter egg hunt . . . I think we do some pretty special things to try and retain community.

And it's very difficult because you're bringing in people from outside the community, and I don't think it's necessarily an Estes Park issue so much as it is a societal issue. We're a much more transient society; we don't stay places long. And that's hard when you try to build friendships and sort of institutional history, if you will. When people are constantly going in and out, you feel like you're constantly reeducating them as to what Estes Park is and what makes it work and those things.

Betty Kilsdonk: Any regrets or disappointments from your time on the town board?

Susan Doylen: There's not a vote . . . there was one vote (I'll take that back). There was one vote on Davis Hill that was sort of a split discussion of zoning and there was . . . that was the only vote that I wish I could retract, that I would have done slightly different; I would have reversed the two. But other than that. . . .

Betty Kilsdonk: And why?

Susan Doylen: It was a zoning question and it was very confusing. That's the only one that I'm not comfortable with to this day. But that goes back to, like, '94 or '95. It was sort of a B&B question, not totally relevant to the rest of the community. But that's the only one that sticks in my craw. I'm glad we did the vote for Good Samaritan. I'm proud of the votes we took. I don't feel like there's anything I would take back.

Was it all fun? No. Were some of the conflicts really ugly? Yeah. Were they frightening? Yeah. There were a lot of people that didn't want a housing authority, that felt that those people—"those people"—didn't have a right to be in our community. That's when I got Caller ID on the phone, because some of the phone calls were very hateful. It was a lot of people feeling like, well, "No one helped me."

And it's slightly different. We have an environment that has become very desirable and so it's very difficult for a young family to live here, stay here. It's hard to keep nurses in the hospital; it's hard to keep teachers at the schools. It's changing; it's very much changing. Have we sold out? I don't think so. There's a lot of private land. If the town board had owned everything, land prices would only be higher. So the economic laws of supply and demand have really forced us to grow. This is a desirable place, the economy is strong in the rest of the United States, and there's a whole generation that has been able to afford second homes.

Do I miss a lot of the things? Yeah, I do. I miss the sense of community. I miss the sort of small town . . . we're more of an urban town, and I put a lot of that on technology and communications and how different we are. But that's not just Estes Park; that's everywhere. And we're a big part of everywhere. There are a lot of people that come here from all over the world so do we own this place? No. We may own little pieces of it, but we don't own it. We don't own the national park. You have to be a little bit philosophical and say, you know, "Yes, we've changed but we haven't changed anywhere near as much as many other places have."

Betty Kilsdonk: You mentioned that Margaret Houston was perhaps the first woman on the town board. And where there have been women since—I'm thinking of Paula Steige and Polly Gunn and yourself—still, there's only one woman

on the town board at this time.

Susan Doylen: Correct.

Betty Kilsdonk: Do you think . . . what kind of place does gender politics have in this town, and do you think there'll ever be a woman mayor of Estes Park?

Susan Doylen: I think it's very important for women, whether it's municipal government or federal government or state, local, whatever . . . women have got to start playing a bigger role. I think a woman's voice carries a different tone; I think it carries a different experience. I think we are different in the way we solve problems. Are we better, worse? I don't know but I think we're different. And I think if we truly desire representative leadership, you need women. And I hope there is a woman mayor soon. I hope that individual has the strength and the candor and the . . . just the way necessary to lead this community through some of the challenges it will have in the future.

I think we've gone through a lot of challenges in the last 15, 20 years but I don't think they're going to end there. I think there will be more in the future. I hope the . . . whoever it is—whoever the next mayor is—thinks independently, thinks thoughtfully, thinks fairly, thinks with compassion, thinks with intelligence, and leads the same way. We'll see.

Betty Kilsdonk: You are very involved with our sister city organization. And of course, our sister city's Monteverde in Costa Rica. What do you think . . . this is Estes Park's first real sister city. What do you think is the significance of Estes Park having a sister city and what will that be in the future for our town?

Susan Doylen: We found that the Costa Ricans do things sort of in their own time frame. And we're not there to force ourselves on them or force our ideas on them or be their helper or savior or anything.

There's sort of an immediate sense of trust and sharing with the Costa Ricans that I've met. And I've gained an awful lot. I think the community has an awful lot to gain from the relationship if for no other reason than to realize that there's another community that shares similar problems, similar challenges.

Not similar histories, but similar issues. And they may not have the skin color, they may not have the same environment exactly . . . they have tropical rainforest, we have dry mountain desert. But we've been able to share. And we've shared meals, we've shared thoughts, we've shared concerns for our environment. We've learned things from them, they've learned things from us.

We may live within the bosom of the mountains here but there are other things out there that are not so similar that are not frightening but we can learn from. And the relationship, in my mind, has been very good and I think anyone who has experienced it could echo that. They're pretty special and it's a pretty special environment, very similar to ours, just in a different place.

Betty Kilsdonk: What are your dreams and hopes for Estes Park?

Susan Doylen: That . . . oh, my dreams and hopes for Estes Park. That we would still have diversity in the future; that's a big one.

Betty Kilsdonk: What kind of diversity?

Susan Doylen: Economic diversity. Diversity of professions—people that come with different skills and different education or trades, whatever. That we would be able to make a whole community that will be a safe community; we will be safe from some of the things out there in the world that are pretty ugly.

You know, people make parking the biggest thing in the world in Estes Park but if you look at the war in Iraq, that's pretty scary. If you look at the bombings in the UK, that's pretty scary. We have a pretty idyllic life here and our trials are really pretty minimal in the scheme of the whole world.

I would hope that our environment stays healthy and protected because that's part of why a lot of us are here. I would hope that our children want to come home and continue the history that some of their families have in the valley. I would hope that people want to stay here, not just for 10 years but for an entire lifetime so that we maintain continuity of ideas and visions. And, yeah, visions change, but I think there are a lot of good things that have been started that need to continue.

I would hope that this community is insulated from too much money and the ugliness that comes with that. I would hope that people would still care about each other, that they would still be compassionate about their neighbors, their friends, their family. I think those are my biggest hopes.

Betty Kilsdonk: Is there anything I haven't asked you that you would like to say?

Susan Doylen: Wow. I think we've pretty much covered everything; I can't think of anything.

Betty Kilsdonk: Thank you very much.

Susan Doylen: You're welcome.

Interview Ends

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